TO:
Renata B. Hesse
Antitrust Division
U.S. Department of Justice
601 D Street NW
Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20530-0001

FROM:
Stephen C.Scherer
325 Overdale Street
Morgantown, WV 26501

Dear Ms. Hesse:

Hello, I am a doctoral student nearing completion at West Virginia
University. I've spent nearly four years working in instructional
design and developing educational software for use over the Internet.
I've had several successful projects, all with a minimum of external
funding.

I find many of the settlement issues with Microsoft Corporation
"unsettling." For those of us who follow technological issues and
trends, the course that Microsoft Corporation has taken with respect to
providing a viable solution to their anticompetitive behavior is a slap
in the face. Their proposed settlement does little to weaken their
monopolistic behavior, and in fact the settlement does appear to
strengthen their position, especially their enroaching dominance over
Internet protocols and "distributed applications." The Internet was
not designed as a monopolistic stronghold by a company, but rather as a
marketplace for products and ideas.

The concern that I have as an educator with a significant background in
software development is that educational innovation will become stifled
by a company that does not give a damn about education; Microsoft
Corporation sees the educational setting as a profit setting. And
unfortunately, the last thing that our educational institutions have is
money. I've seen the teachers, and I've watched the burnout.
Introducing Microsoft software into educational environments will only
make this situation worse. Microsoft Corporation behaves in a
methodical way: it finds new environments and takes them over.
Educational environments are too important to leave to the hands of a
convicted monopolist of questionable values:

http://news.cnet.com/news/0-1003-200-7978672.html

Many of us are quite sickened by the behavior of Microsoft Corporation, and have been for years, but are at a loss at the steps to be taken to prevent this overgrown gorilla from destroying our educational environments through veiled profit seeking motives.

I am a supporter of Open Source software; I believe that educational software should be developed under the Open Source model, because we are dealing with something that is so much more important than profits. We need to find software that works, and make it available to the widest available audiences; this is imperative, as we are in desperate need of educated individuals if we are to stave off very serious environmental and behavioral consequences that lie in our not too distant future. Education is a community effort, not a business effort, and providing Microsoft Corporation entry into our educational institutions only reminds me of the following phrase: "The road to Hell is paved with Good Intention." I know what works, and I'm pretty sure I know what doesn't work.

Stephen C. Scherer
West Virginia University

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